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Agenda item 71 (b)

GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America: revised draft resolution

Small arms

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 50/70 B of 12 December 1995,

Recalling also its resolution 51/45 L of 10 December 1996, in which it welcomed the initiative taken by Mali concerning the question of the illicit circulation of small arms and their collection in the affected States of the Saharo-Sahelian subregion,

Convinced of the need for a comprehensive approach to promote, at the global and regional levels, the control and reduction of small arms and light weapons in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner as a contribution to international peace and security,

Reaffirming the inherent right to individual or collective self-defence recognized in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, which implies that States also have the right to acquire arms with which to defend themselves,

Reaffirming also the right of self-determination of all peoples, in particular peoples under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, and the importance of the effective realization of this right, as enunciated, inter alia, in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993,[1]

Reaffirming further the urgent need for practical disarmament in the context of the conflicts the United Nations is actually dealing with and of the weapons that are actually killing people in the hundreds of thousands,

Welcoming the submission of the Secretary-General's report prepared with the assistance of the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms,[2] which contains measures to reduce the excessive and destabilizing accumulation and transfer of small arms and light weapons in specific regions of the world and to prevent such accumulations and transfers from occurring in future,

Welcoming also the guidelines for international arms transfers in the context of General Assembly resolution 46/36 H of 6 December 1991, which were adopted by consensus by the Disarmament Commission in 1996[3] and taking note of its ongoing efforts to consider guidelines for post-conflict situations, including demobilization of former combatants, disposal and destruction of weapons, as well as confidence- and security-building measures,

1. Endorses the recommendations contained in the report on small arms,[2] which was approved unanimously by the Panel of Governmental Experts on Small Arms;

2. Calls upon all Member States to implement the relevant recommendations to the extent possible and where necessary in cooperation with appropriate international and regional organizations and/or through international and regional cooperation among police, intelligence, customs and border control services;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to implement the relevant recommendations, in particular to initiate a study on the problems of ammunition and explosives in all their aspects, as early as possible, within available financial resources, and in cooperation with appropriate international and regional organizations where necessary;

4. Also requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the report and on the steps that they have taken to implement its recommendations, and, in particular, to seek their views on the recommendation concerning the convening of an international conference on the illicit arms

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[1] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.

[2] A/52/298.

[3] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/51/42), annex I.

trade in all its aspects in time for consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session;

5. Further requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report, with the assistance of a group of governmental experts to be nominated by him in 1998 on the basis of equitable geographical representation, (a) on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the report on small arms[1] and (b) on further actions recommended to be taken, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session;

6. Encourages Member States and the Secretary-General to carry out recommendations for post-conflict situations, including demobilization of former combatants and disposal and destruction of weapons;

7. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "Small arms".